

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

1. (previously presented) A disengageable connector for interconnecting panels, the connector comprising;

a longitudinally extending connector body having a substantially similar profile along its entire length, the connector body including a base and a projection extending from the base;

the base includes a top surface and a bottom surface, the bottom surface being composed of an underside consisting essentially of a first footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base, a second footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base and a third footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base; and

a first protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a first edge of the base and a second protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a second edge, opposite the first edge, of the base, the first protrusion and the second protrusion are spaced apart from the projection and are located on either side of the projection;

wherein the first footing member and the second footing members are respectively positioned beneath the first protrusion and the second protrusion, and the third footing member is positioned beneath the projection, the first footing member, the second footing member and the third footing member being spaced by a first recess extending fully between the first footing member and the third footing member and a second recess extending fully between the second footing member and the third footing member, and the first footing member, the second footing member and the third footing member are shaped and dimensioned to compress into an underlying

foam pad to a predetermined limited extent such that the connector sits upon the underlying foam pad with the top surface of the base lying in substantially the same plane as the upper surface of the underlying foam pad.

2. (original) The connector according to claim 1, wherein the projection extends vertically from the top surface of the base, the projection having top and bottom portions, and comprising right and left halves for insertion into edges of adjacent panels to be connected.

3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented) A disengageable connector for interconnecting panels, the connector comprising;

a longitudinally extending connector body having a substantially similar profile along its entire length, the connector body including a base and a projection extending from the base;

the base includes a top surface and a bottom surface, and a first footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base, a second footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base and a third footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base; and

a first protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a first edge of the base and a second protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a second edge, opposite the first edge,

of the base, the first protrusion and the second protrusion are spaced apart from the projection and are located on either side of the projection;

wherein the first footing member and the second footing members are respectively positioned beneath the first protrusion and the second protrusion, and the third footing member is positioned beneath the projection, and the first footing member, the second footing member and the third footing member are shaped and dimensioned to compress into an underlying foam pad to a predetermined limited extent such that the connector sits upon the underlying foam pad with the top surface of the base lying in substantially the same plane as the upper surface of the underlying foam pad; and

wherein the first, second and third footing members are respectively approximately 0.036 inches in depth.

5. (original) The connector according to claim 4, wherein the protrusions extend substantially the entire length of the connector.

6. (canceled)

7. (original) The connector according to claim 6, wherein a recess is formed between the first footing member and the third footing member and a recess is formed between the second footing member and the third footing member.

8-15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) A disengageable connector for interconnecting panels, the connector comprising;

a longitudinally extending connector body, the connector body including a base having a longitudinal extent with a first end and a second end, the connector further including a projection extending vertically from a top surface of the base, the projection including a central stem with first and second outwardly extending members extending from the central stem;

a first protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a first edge of the base along an entire length of the base, the first protrusion including a top portion and the first protrusion decreases in height as it extends from the center of the base toward an edge of the base, and a second protrusion extending vertically from the base adjacent a second edge, opposite the first edge, of the base along the entire length of the base, the second protrusion including a top portion and the second protrusion decreases in height as it extends from the center of the base toward an edge of the base;; and

wherein the projection extends beyond the longitudinal extent of the base along at least one end of the base to define an outwardly extending ear.

17. (original) The connector according to claim 16, wherein the projection includes a top portion and a bottom portion, the projection further including right and left halves for insertion into edges of adjacent panels to be connected.

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18. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 16, wherein the base includes a bottom surface and longitudinally extending first and second footing members extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base and in the same direction as the base such that the first and second footing members extend the entire length of the base, the first and second footing members being shaped and dimensioned to compress the upper surface of a resilient pad positioned beneath the connector and flooring panels, wherein the first and second footing member are respectively positioned beneath the first protrusion and the second protrusion.

19. (canceled)

20. (previously presented) The connector according to claim 16, wherein each of the first protrusion and the second protrusion extends beyond the longitudinal extent of the base along at least one end of the base to form a locking tab.

21-26. (canceled)

27. (new) A disengageable connector for interconnecting panels, the connector comprising;

a longitudinally extending connector body having a substantially similar profile along its entire length, the connector body including a base and a projection extending from the base;

the base includes a top surface and a bottom surface, wherein the projection extends vertically upwardly from the top surface of the base, the projection having top and bottom portions, and comprising right and left halves for insertion into edges of adjacent panels to be connected extending upwardly from the base;

the bottom surface is composed of an underside consisting essentially of a first footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base, a second footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base and a third footing member extending downwardly from the bottom surface of the base;

a first protrusion extends vertically from the base adjacent a first edge of the base and a second protrusion extends vertically from the base adjacent a second edge, opposite the first edge, of the base, the first protrusion and the second protrusion are spaced apart from the projection and are located on either side of the projection beyond a lateral extent of the respective right and left halves of the projection, the first protrusion including a top portion and the first protrusion decreases in height as it extends from a center of the base toward an edge of the base and the second protrusion including a top portion and the second protrusion decreases in height as it extends from the center of the base toward an edge of the base; and

wherein the first footing member and the second footing member are respectively positioned beneath the first protrusion and the second protrusion, and the third footing member is

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positioned beneath the projection, the first footing member, the second footing member and the third footing member being spaced by a first recess extending fully between the first footing member and the third footing member and a second recess extending fully between the second footing member and the third footing member, and the first footing member, the second footing member and the third footing member are shaped and dimensioned to compress into an underlying foam pad to a predetermined limited extent such that the connector sits upon the underlying foam pad with the top surface of the base lying in substantially the same plane as the upper surface of the underlying foam pad.